

Thesis:

When the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, President George H.W. Bush prophesied a 'new world order' where the nations of the world could prosper and live in harmony. A world where nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice. For a time, this new order appeared to be taking shape as the number of democracies around the world rose dramatically while autocratic regimes fell. In 2002, for the first time in history, the number of democratic regimes outnumbered autocratic regimes. However, the honeymoon period for this new world order would not last. According to Freedom House, since 2006 global freedom scores have declined every single year for 15 consecutive years. Over this time, Democratic backsliding has been evident in countries such as the Philippines, Venezuela, Hungary, and Poland. So, what's caused this recent surge of authoritarianism around the world? A combination of economic and cultural factors will be examined to understand this surge of authoritarians.